News from the Wyoming Department of Health

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Goshen County Man State's Second West Nile Virus Death

CHEYENNE óWyoming Department of Health officials are confirming that an elderly Goshen County man who died Saturday (September 16) was infected with West Nile virus.

The man represents the second West Nile-related death in Wyoming this year. There have been 56 cases of reported human West Nile virus infections across the state for 2006.

The Goshen County man developed the more serious form of West Nile infection, known as West Nile neuroinvasive disease. Symptoms include severe headache, fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions and paralysis. Most people who develop clinical illness as a result of the virus experience West Nile fever with symptoms including fever, headache, body aches, skin rash and swollen lymph nodes.

õWest Nile infection can be a very serious health threat, particularly for older residents,ö said Dr. Tracy Murphy, state epidemiologist with the Wyoming Department of Health. õAnyone experiencing West Nile virus-related symptoms should contact a healthcare provider for treatment and testing.ö

Mosquitoes spread West Nile virus after they feed on infected birds and then bite people, other birds and animals. Information on preventing the virus is available online at www.badskeeter.org or by calling the West Nile virus hotline at: 1-877-WYO-BITE.

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